MALIBU COMICS

ULTRAVERSE

YEAR ZERO

THE DEATH OF THE SQUAD

#3 $2.95 $4.00 CAN

SOMETIMES HAVING POWERS *ISN'T* ENOUGH...

...NOT WHEN YOU'RE MARKED FOR DEATH BY **REX MUNDI!**

HUDNALL
DOVE
WHITING

DIRECT EDITION

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CITY ON FIRE

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WE'D BECOME FAMOUS. WE'D HAD OUR SUCCESSES AND A TASTE OF FAILURE. BUT THE TRUE TEST OF OUR ABILITIES WAS YET TO COME.
IT BEGAN WITH AN AMATEUR VIDEO THE YEAR BEFORE.
A MAN CAPTURED THREE WHITE COPS BEATING A BLACK MAN THEY'D PULLED OVER FOR SPEEDING.
MONTHS LATER, THERE WAS A TRIAL. THE THREE COPS WERE THE DEFENDANTS.
AS THE PROCEEDINGS DRAGGED ON, EMOTIONS SEETHED IN THE HEARTS OF MANY CITIZENS.

SOME CITIZENS IN PARTICULAR WERE MAD ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS.
I WANNA SMOKE THEIR SORRY ASS!
GOTTA BE A WAY TO BRING 'EM DOWN. THE SQUAD DISSED US MAJOR.* WE GOT NO JUICE ON THE STREETS NOW. 'S'GETTIN' HARD TO MAKE A DEAD PREZ.
CAN'T DO IT, TYRONE. THEY'RE FIVE-O, NOW. WE TRY ANYTHING NASTY AND WE'LL BE DOIN' AT LEAST A DIME. MAYBE A QUARTER.
* SEE SQUAD #2—P.C.
MAYBE WE SHOULD GO GET REAL JOBS.
SHUT UP, FOOL!
WHAT, YOU THINK I WANNA FLIP BURGERS? F'THAT!
GREASE, YOU GOTTA KEEP THE FAITH.
MY WALLET'S LOSIN' FAITH, DADDY K. WE NEED TO SCORE OR ELSE!
AND MY FEELING'S THE SQUAD'S GONNA GET IN THE WAY UNLESS WE GO STRAIGHT.

THE CITY MADE US HEROES IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC THROUGH CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED ATTACKS ON CRACK HOUSES AND HOSTAGE SITUATIONS.
BUT MOST OF THE TIME THEY HAD US DOING PUBLIC RELATIONS WORK.
The Squad
CRIME HAS A NEW ENEMY
TWO DAYS BEFORE THE VERDICT, WE WERE TALKING TO SOME HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS NEAR DOWNTOWN L.A.
SO WE'RE AUTHORIZED TO FIGHT CRIME UNDER THE CITY'S WATCHFUL EYE.
WE WANT TO *HELP* PEOPLE, AND THE BEST WAY WE CAN DO THAT IS GET THE CRIMINALS OFF OUR STREETS.
YOU CALL RACIST ATTACKS ON PEOPLE OF COLOR "*HELP*"!? WHY AREN'T YOU USING YOUR POWER TO FIGHT INJUSTICE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "RACIST"!? WE'RE NOT RACIST!
LET ME ANSWER THIS ONE, HARDCASE.
4

THE SQUAD IS A MULTI-CULTURAL TEAM OF CRIME FIGHTERS.
AND WE *ARE* FIGHTING INJUSTICE. THE INJUSTICE CRIME BRINGS TO THE LIVES OF *INNOCENT PEOPLE.*
WHY DON'T YOU TELL THE *TRUTH!* YOU WORK FOR THE POLICE, WHO'RE *ONLY* TRYING TO COMMIT GENOCIDE AGAINST OUR PEOPLE!
WHY ELSE WOULD YOU *ONLY* BE WORKING IN MINORITY AREA!?
LISTEN! I'M FROM THE 'HOOD TOO! I GREW UP HATING THE MEAN STREETS OF WATTS! WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE THINGS SAFE FOR PEOPLE!
I JUST WANT TO SAY SOMETHING...
DJ BLAST IS RIGHT, WE'RE OUT TO HELP PEOPLE IN THE DISADVANTAGED AREAS BY LOWERING THE CRIME RATE. POVERTY BRINGS DESPAIR, BUT *CRIME RUBS IT IN!*
THE RICH AREAS ALREADY GET LOTS OF ATTENTION. IT'S TIME OUR NEIGHBORHOODS DID, TOO!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

TARZANA: JASVINDER SINGH JOHAL
OKEY DOKEY
JASPER, I NEED YOU TO WORK THE STORE ON LA BREA THIS WEEK. YOUR COUSIN TINKU'S OUT SICK.
OKAY, UNCLE.
JASVINDER SOMETIMES WONDERED WHY HE DIDN'T USE HIS NEW-FOUND POWERS TO GAIN WEALTH, LIKE THE MEMBERS OF THE SQUAD.
BUT THEN HE REMEMBERED HIS PHOTOGRAPHY, AND HOW HE GAVE ALL THAT UP BECAUSE HIS UNCLE NEEDED HIM TO RUN THE FAMILY FRANCHISE.
SOMEDAY, HE THINKS, HE'LL BE ABLE TO BREAK OUT ON HIS OWN.
EAST HOLLYWOOD: RAMON CHAVEZ.
HE'D BEEN WORKING ON THIS DEVICE FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS AND SOON IT WOULD BE READY. THEN HE HAD TO FIND THE RIGHT PERSON TO USE IT.
THEN...THEN HE COULD KISS HIS PAST GOODBYE. RAMON CHAVEZ WILL BE NO MORE.

THE TRIAL OF THE THREE POLICE MEN STARTED TO WIND DOWN, AND A VERDICT WAS EXPECTED IN A DAY OR SO. THE CITY HELD ITS BREATH.
EVERYTHING SEEMED NORMAL IN THAT BRIEF TIME SPAN.
TOM FILMED A CAR COMMERCIAL.
I'LL TAKE IT!
I WAS SIGNING MY BUSINESS OVER TO SOME FRIENDS WHO WANTED TO BUY IT FROM ME.
CARLOS AND HIS WIFE WENT SHOPPING FOR A NEW HOUSE...
FOR SALE
AND JAMAL WAS WORKING ON HIS FIRST ALBUM.
7

THEN IT HAPPENED.
HAS THE JURY REACHED A VERDICT?
YES, WE HAVE, YOUR HONOR.
ON THE CHARGE OF EXCESSIVE USE OF FORCE, WE FIND THE DEFENDANTS...
...NOT GUILTY!

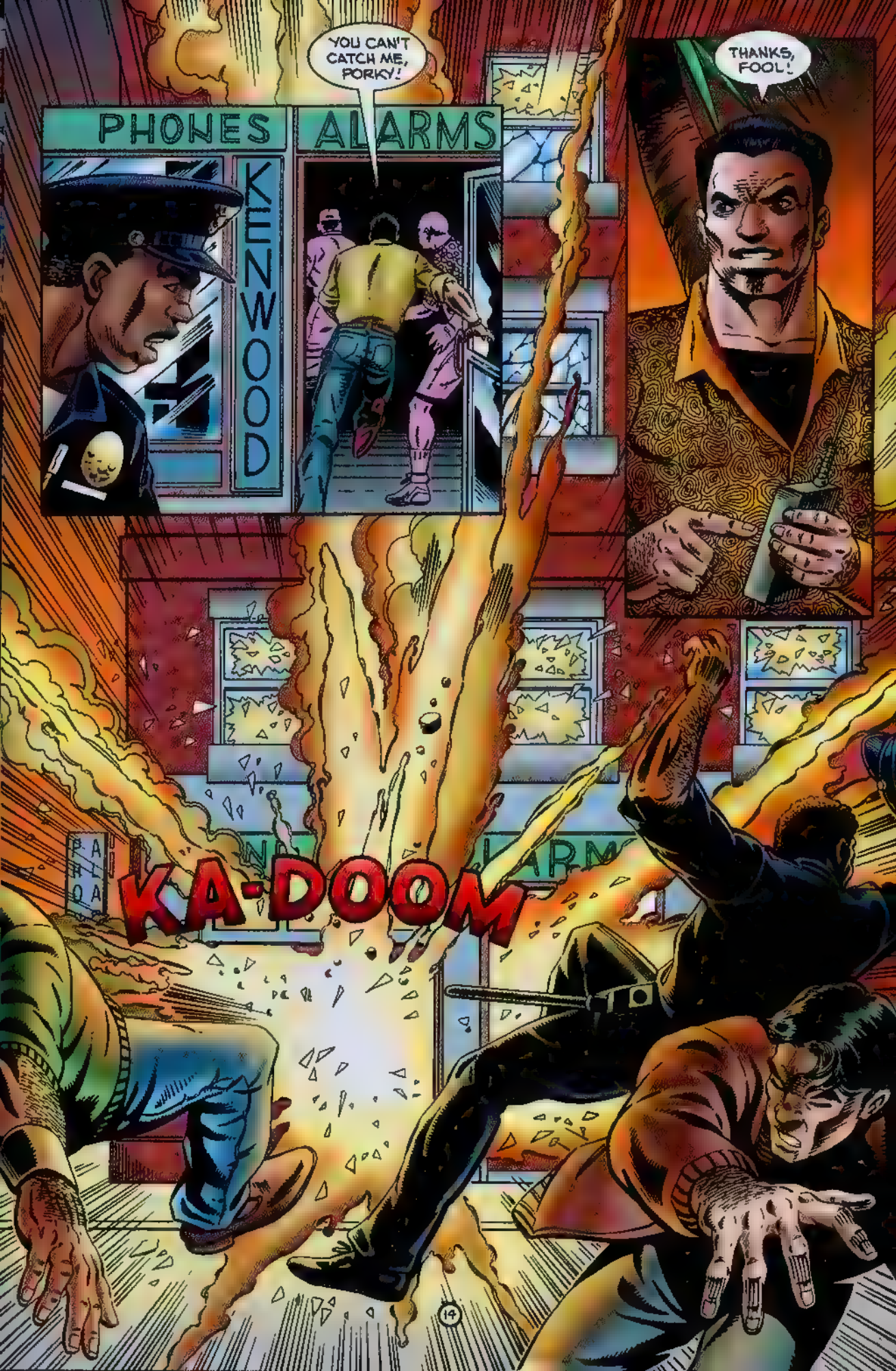
DID YOU HEAR THE VERDICT?
YEAH! WHAT A SURPRISE!
THEY JUST RENDERED A VERDICT OF INNOCENT.
OH MY GOD...THERE'S GOING TO BE TROUBLE.
WE'RE ON! GET THE TRUCK!
THIS CITY'S GONNA BURN!
CRASH!

REPORTS OF RIOTING HAVE BROKEN OUT IN SOUTH CENTRAL AND ARE SPREADING. THERE ARE REPORTS OF SHOOTINGS, LOOTINGS, YOU NAME IT.
GO OUT THERE AND DO WHAT YOU CAN. THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG DAY.
WELL, UH... TO BE FRANK...
WHERE DO YOU WANT US TO GO, LIEUTENANT?
I KNOW, I KNOW... BUT THE CITY OFFICIALS ARE AFRAID YOU MIGHT DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD WITHOUT POLICE SUPERVISION.
WHAAAT!?
I HAVE ORDERS TO HAVE YOU STAY HERE AND NOT GET INVOLVED.
AND WE CAN'T SPARE ANY OFFICERS TO GO OUT WITH YOU.

I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE VERDICT, BUT I DON'T WANT TO SEE MY 'HOOD GET TRASHED EITHER!
WE'RE NEEDED OUT THERE! YOU HAVE TO LET US GO!
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT I HAVE TO DO WHAT MY WATCH COMMANDER TELLS ME. AND HIS ORDERS CAME FROM THE TOP
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING WE NEVER HEARD YOUR ORDERS THEN, ISN'T IT?!
C'MON, CREW! LET'S GET BUSY!
GOD HELP US. I HOPE YOU SUCCEED.

VIDEO-VCR
OPEN 7 DAYS
RAY BAN
021/334-834
GIFT SHOP
SOCKS
Panasonic
JVC
INSANE. THIS IS FRIGGIN' WACKO!
MAYBE IT STARTED WITH ANGER, BUT NOW IT'S ALL ABOUT GREED.
AT LEAST IT'S DONE SOMETHING NOTHING ELSE SEEMS TO DO.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S BROUGHT ALL THE RACES TOGETHER FOR A COMMON CAUSE.
COME ON. LET'S DO SOME GOOD!

NEARBY.
PUT THIS ON AND DO WHAT I SAY AND YOU'LL GET A BEN FRANKLIN.
WHAT'S THE CATCH, RAMON?
THAT COP KNOWS ME. JUST WALK PAST HIM SHOWING THE BOX I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU.
WHAT'S IN THE BOX?
NOTHING.
WHAT?!
IT'S A HOLOGRAPHIC ILLUSION. AS SOON AS YOU GET IN THE STORE, TAKE IT OFF AND THE COP WON'T RECOGNIZE YOU.
AMAZING!
HEY, PIG! I HEAR NO ONE'S SELLING DONUTS TODAY!
RAMON CHAVEZ! YOU BETTER NOT DO ANY LOOTING OR I'LL BUST YOUR SORRY—


YOU CAN'T CATCH ME, PORKY!
PHONES
ALARMS
KENWOOD
THANKS, FOOL!
KA-DOOM

DID YOU SEE WHO DID THIS?
GET OUT OF HERE!
YOU DON'T BELONG!
YEAH... SOME LOCAL GANG BANGER THE IDIOT BLEW HIMSELF UP!
HAHAHAHA!
15

GO AWAY! I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING!
WE'RE GONNA BURN THIS JOINT!
IF YOU BUY 3 YOU CAN GET ANOTHER 5 FOR FREE
YOU'RE A BUNCH OF RACISTS! WE'RE GONNA TEACH YOU A LESSON!
I DON'T THINK SO.
WELL, WELL... IF ISN'T *UNCLE TOM!* YOU COME TO STOP US FROM OUR FREEDOM FIGHTING?
FREEDOM FIGHTING! ALL I SEE ARE A BUNCH OF *PUNKS* MAKING TROUBLE AND THREATENING PEOPLE FOR *NO GOOD REASON!*
THIS GUY'S NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO YOU! LEAVE HIM ALONE AND GO HOME!
16

SELL OUT!
LATER, TOM!
DAMN!
PHOTOCOPIES

PUT THAT STUFF DOWN! GO HOME!
PHOTO
TV — VIDEO
BEST PRICES
GIFT SHOP
AKAI TV 5-1
SHUT UP!
GET YOUR CRACKER ASS BACK TO ENCINO!
YOU GO HOME!
PUT THAT BACK!
JVC VCR-SR
HEY! STOP THAT!
OPPRESSOR!
RACIST!

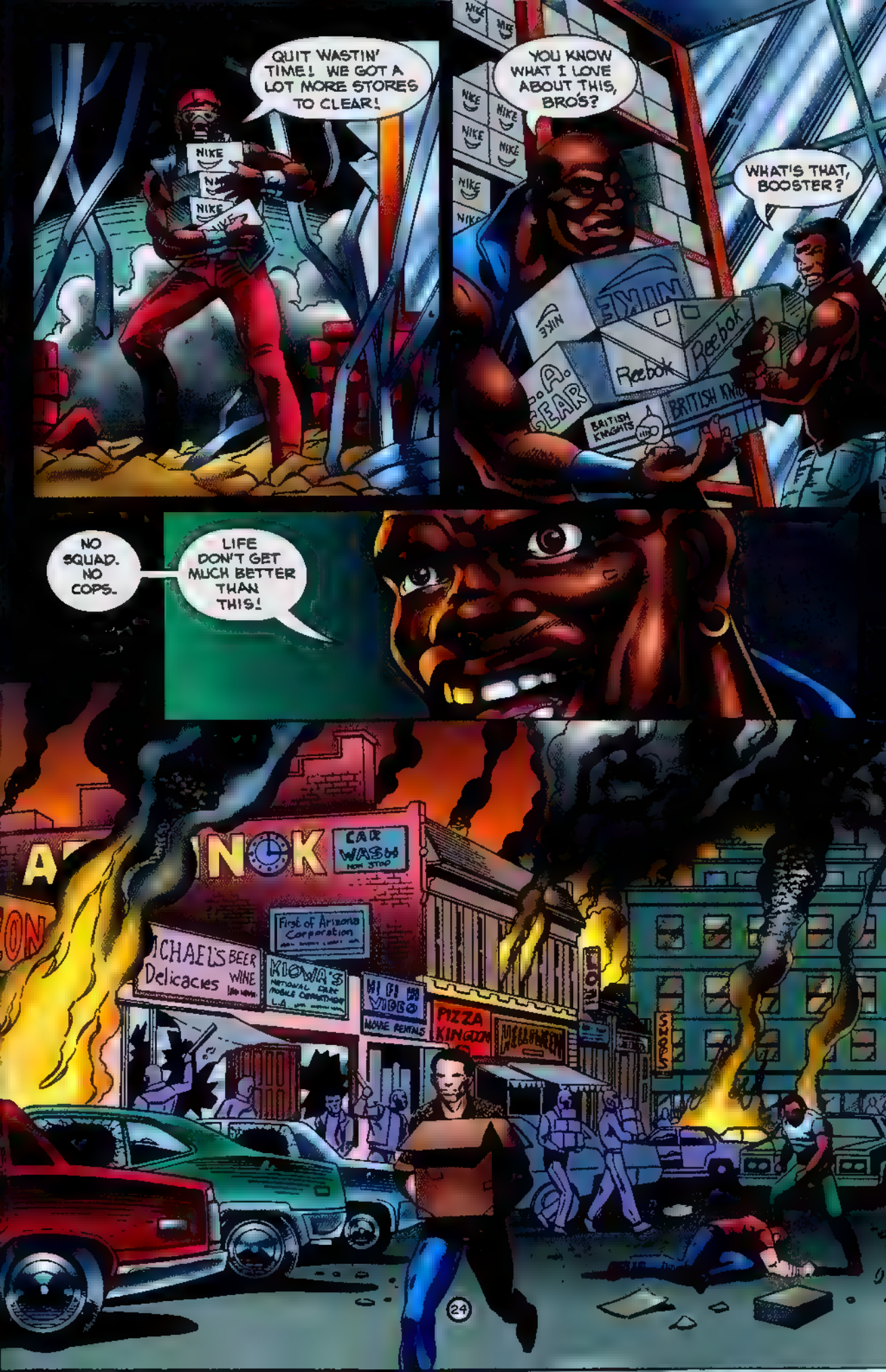
LISTEN TO ME!
RACISM IS A TWO-WAY STREET! JUST BECAUSE I'M WHITE *DOESN'T MAKE ME* A RACIST! AND JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT *DOESN'T MEAN* YOU *CAN'T BE ONE!*
I'M TRYING TO PREVENT INNOCENT PEOPLE FROM BEING HURT BY THIS MADNESS! YOU'RE *HURTING* SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS BY *STEALING* THEIR MERCHANDISE! BY *VANDALIZING* THEIR STORES!
YOU KNOW MANY OF THESE MERCHANTS AREN'T YOUR RACE, SO BY ATTACKING THEM AS A SYMBOL OF THEIR RACE, *YOU* ARE BEING RACIST!
THE PEOPLE BEING HURT ARE *INNOCENT!* THEY HAD *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THE BEATING!
IONEER
HITACHI

OKAY... I HEAR YOU.
I STILL THINK WE GOTTA RIGHT, BUT...
YOU CAN'T STOP US! THERE'S TOO MANY! SO BLOW!
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO, HERO?! THERE'S ONLY ONE OF YOU HERE!
AW, SCREW IT! HE'S RIGHT.
WHAT CAN HARDCASE DO?
GO HOME! THIS AIN'T YOUR BUSINESS!

HEY! NO ONE'S TOUCHED THAT ONE YET!
THAT'S RUN BY THEM TOWEL-HEADS! I HATE THOSE GUYS!
OKEY DOKEY
Discount
NO 3 PIZ
LET'S TORCH IT!
UNCLE, THE RIOTS ARE GETTING CLOSE TO THE STORE. WHAT DO I DO?
KEESH!
HEY, TOWEL-HEAD! WELCOME TO THE REVOLUTION!
GET OUT OF HERE! LEAVE THIS STORE ALONE!
GO AWAY!!
DON'T TELL US WHAT TO DO, YOU STUPID...

EEAAHH!!
NO! NO!
I DIDN'T MEAN IT!
I DIDN'T MEAN IT. I DIDN'T MEAN IT.
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
I'M SORRY... I'M SORRY..

STREET GEAR
DUSTER
KRASH
PROPER! NOW THIS IS WHAT I CALL A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY!
YO! LOOK AT THAT!
EVEN THE VALLEY BOYS ARE GETTIN' INTO THE ACT! WHAT'S THE WORLD COMIN' TO?!
VIDEO CAMERA
VHS
SONY
AKAI
23

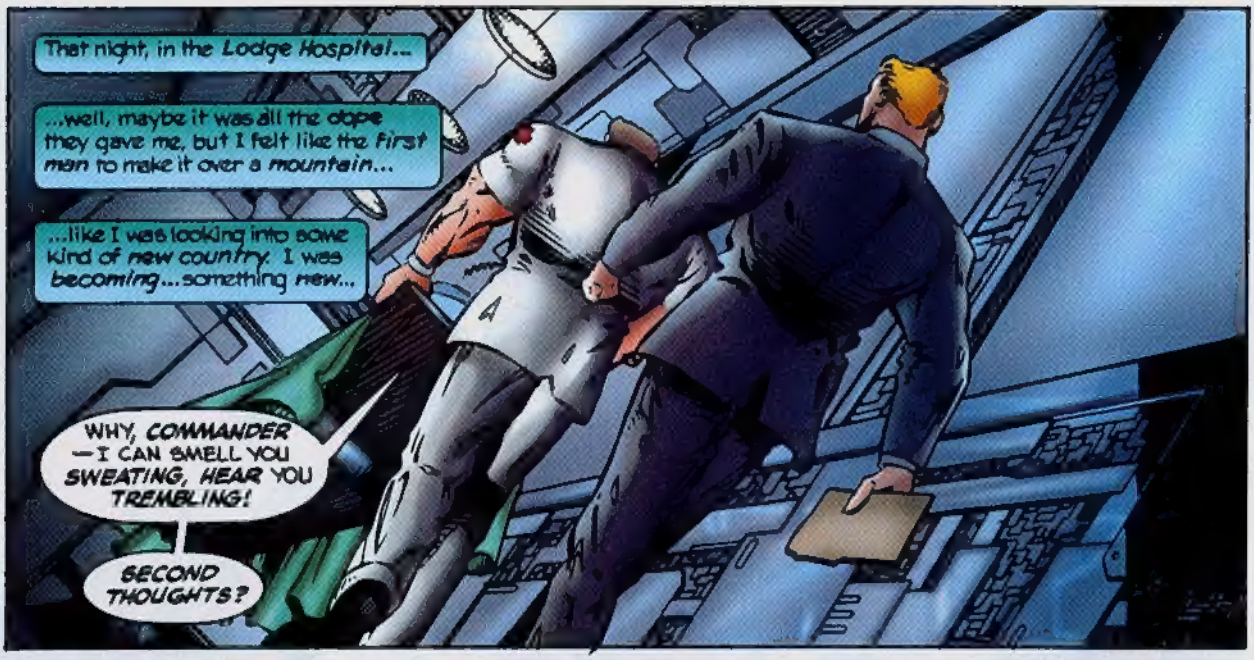

QUIT WASTIN' TIME! WE GOT A LOT MORE STORES TO CLEAR!
YOU KNOW WHAT I LOVE ABOUT THIS, BRO'S?
WHAT'S THAT, BOOSTER?
NIKE
Reebok
A. GEAR
BRITISH KNIGHTS
NO SQUAD. NO COPS.
LIFE DON'T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THIS!
CAR WASH
First of Arizona Corporation
Delicacies
WINE
KIOWA'S
HI FI VIDEO
MOVIE RENTALS
PIZZA
SHOES

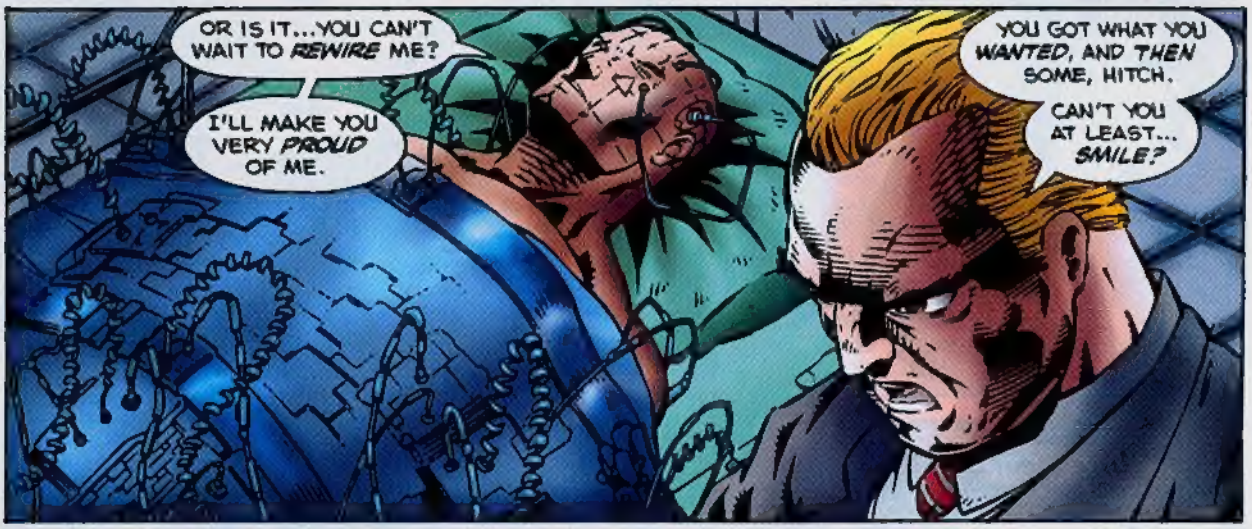
TWO DAYS LATER, PARKER CENTER
I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I'VE SEEN THE LAST FEW DAYS...
YEAH, WELL... I GOTTA TAKE CARE OF SOME BUSINESS...
IT WAS INSANE... TOTALLY INSANE...
NO, IT WASN'T. IT WAS JUST ORGANIZED LOOTING. A LOT OF PEOPLE MADE OUT. THE TRIAL WAS JUST AN EXCUSE.
I JUST WISH WE COULD HAVE MADE MORE OF A DIFFERENCE.
HEY, I OVERHEARD YOU GUYS TALKING. I JUST WANTED TO SAY WE REALLY APPRECIATED YOUR HELP.
YOU DID THE RIGHT THING BY USING JUDICIOUS FORCE AND TRYING TO CALM PEOPLE DOWN. YOU PROBABLY KEPT THINGS FROM BEING WORSE THAN THEY WERE.
THANKS, BROTHER. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
MY NAME'S JAMAL, TOO.
JAMAL BROWN.
NEXT ISSUE:
THE DEATH OF THE SQUAD

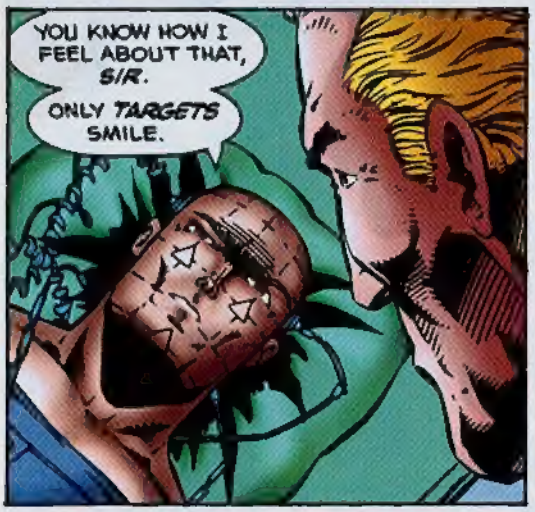
This'll be short and sweet. The least you need to know.
Twelve years ago. July.
You never caught me in Manhattan in that heat, unless...
...I had business.
CODENAME: FIREARM
ONLY TARGETS SMILE
THIS IS CHILL... COLDFIRE IS ACQUIRED, OVER.
ROGER, CHILL. HOLD FOR THE CUE TO ACCESS.
The spymasters who played me like they owned me, the Lodge, had just stalled-out my career...
...in one move, I went from going-places star to dead-end "specialist."
Why? Prevailing "wisdom" said, "Anyone who would volunteer for Commander Briggs' new project is too psycho to accomplish it!"
Now, I keep passion out of the play. I'm a professional.
Still, it hurt when Briggs didn't even try to soft-pedal it.
YOU'RE EFFICIENT, HITCH. YOU MAKE ART OF ASSIGNMENTS NO ONE ELSE WILL TRY...
...BUT THE INNER CIRCLE FEELS...YOU'RE A KILLING MACHINE, FIRST, LODGE AGENT, SECOND.

He said, "You're more useful in your present... incarnation." Then Briggs did something unusual.
Told me why this job was important. Briefed me on the client's crimes.
He knows I'm not in the business for sentimental reasons!
As I checked the calculations that insured access through the mirrored glass...
I thought, "If the Ambassador betrayed his people...
"...had dissidents incinerated in stacks of burning auto tires, whatever— that's just political gaming."
LAUGH NOW... THE PRESIDENT'S TOADIES WILL PICK YOUR BRAINS FROM THE FINE WEAVE OF HIS SUIT IN TIME FOR—
CHILL, ABORT ACCESS— COLDFIRE IS SCRUBBED!
TO REPEAT, YOU ARE OUT OF THERE. DO YOU COPY?
I wanted to pretend the comm-link was busted...
... squeeze off the shot anyway, let the world hear it, but...
COPY.
"Tell the Old Man I'm coming in... now!"
THIS SO-CALLED MISSION WAS A TEST, WASN'T IT? A GAME!
NO GAME, I ASSURE YOU. I HAD TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE INNER CIRCLE WHY I WANT YOU TO REPORT TO MEDICAL AT—

Then I shared my hobby with the Old Man... I design undetectable fiberglass weapons. It relaxes me.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MAN? I SAID, YOU PASSED! HITCH!
IF I WAS AFTER MORE THAN THE TRUTH, YOU'D BE DEAD ALREADY, COMMANDER!
LODGE AGENT OR KILLING MACHINE—YOU MANIPULATE THEM BOTH THE SAME! BUT SOMETIMES A MAN CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE IF YOU GIVE HIM ALL THE FACTS! SOMETIMES... HE'S SMARTER THAN YOU THINK.
KEEP THE MOMENTO, SIR. I'LL REPORT TO MEDICAL, AS ORDERED.


That night, in the Lodge Hospital...
...well, maybe it was all the dope they gave me, but I felt like the first man to make it over a mountain...
...like I was looking into some kind of new country. I was becoming...something new...
WHY, COMMANDER —I CAN SMELL YOU SWEATING, HEAR YOU TREMBLING!
SECOND THOUGHTS?


OR IS IT...YOU CAN'T WAIT TO REWIRE ME?
I'LL MAKE YOU VERY PROUD OF ME.
YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED, AND THEN SOME, HITCH.
CAN'T YOU AT LEAST... SMILE?



BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE CODENAME: FIREARM MINI-SERIES. ON SALE NOW!

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